# Fellowship in Prayer

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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*Our purpose: To promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.*

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*EDITORIAL*

We are living we are told, in an ecumenical age. "Ecumenical." A fancy word and, until a few years ago, a strange one. But now it is used everywhere. It has grown so common that it appears, along with other once-rare words like "charisma" and "agape", in movie reviews and journalistic comments on politicians as well as in the news of religion. It is, of course, a theological word. Probably Pope John XXIII popularized it by calling for the Ecumenical Council otherwise known as Vatican II. So, thanks to the enormous publicity tendered the Council and all its debates and pronouncements, most of us have become used to the word. But it is interesting and even a bit surprising to look it up in Webster's and see where it really came from—namely, from Latin, which in turn derived it from several related Greek words, *oikoumene* meaning "the inhabited world," *oiken* meaning "to inhabit", and *oikos* meaning either "house" or "dwelling." And so it follows that if we are really living in an ecumenical age we are inhabiting the same house, which is to say Creation or God's house. It is really a very poetic word, ecumenical. It is both a figure of speech and a very straightforward adjective. In common usage, though, it has come to mean more than people living together on the same earth under the same trees under the same sky. It has somewhere acquired the connotation of people living together happily—of people at peace and at ease with one another, a contented family dwelling under the same roof.

Is this true? Are we—Americans, Russians, French, Chinese, British, Africans, and so forth—really that ecumenical? Are we? On that level, of nationality, are we at all ecumenical? Are we—Baptists, Buddhists, Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Jews, Moslems, and so forth—really that ecumenical? Are we? We try. The Pope and the Patriarch exchange the "kiss of peace." The Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury do the same. Cardinals fly to Protestant conferences in Switzerland. Protestants send official observers to Roman conclaves. Jews invite Christians to partake of seder meals with them. Anglican priests, in black, meditate together with Buddhist priests, in saffron. We try . We are trying. If the leaders of the churches are doing most of the trying, a

lot of it in public places convenient for photographers to get good shots, are we? By "we" I mean people who are not leaders of churches. I mean you and me—and all the rest of the people, without title or tiara, who are living in this one huge overcrowded, somewhat noisy and not-very-well-maintained apartment house called the world.

Are *we* being ecumenical?

It seems to me that the answer is yes, we are. It is on this level, of the personal, that we are being really ecumenical. Within the limits, that is, of human nature. People seem to be trying. They seem to be politer than they used to be. (And to be polite is, in its small but important way, ecumenical.) They seem to be more interested in each other—you in me, I in you. We all seem to find it matters more nowadays that we sympathize with each other, that we empathize—that we feel our way into guessing what it is like to be another person, to be you rather than I. In this fashion we seem to be growing more ecumenical than people ever were before. We are turning out, on this level, to be desirable tenants in our Father's house. I can think of nothing more sympathetic or more truly ecumenical than a poem written by a thirteen year-old girl in Vero Beach, Florida, which was published by the Presbyterian magazine *Venture:*

## AFTERTHOUGHTS ON A NAPALM-DROP ON JUNGLE VILLAGES NEAR HAIPHONG

*Barbara Beidler*

All was still.
The sun rose through silver pine boughs,
Over sleeping green-straw huts,
Over cool rice ponds,
Through the emerald jungles,
Into the sky.

The men rose and went out to the fields and ponds.
The women set pots on the fire, boiling rice and
jungle berries, and some with baskets went for fish.
The children played in the streams and danced through the weeds.

Then there was the flash—silver and gold
Silver and gold,
Silver birds flying,
Golden water raining.
The rice ponds blazed with the new water.
The jungle burst into gold and sent up little birds of fire.
Little animals with fur of flame.

Then the children flamed.
Running—their clothes flying like fiery kites.
Screaming—their screams dying as their faces seared.
The women's baskets burned on their heads.

The men's boats blazed on the rice waters.
Then the rains came.

A rag, fire black, fluttered.
A curl of smoke rose from a lone rice stem.
The forest lay singed, seared.
A hut crumbled.

And all was still.

Listen, Americans,
Listen, clear and long.
The children are screaming
In the jungles of Haiphong.

## DIVINE GUIDANCE

*Mark Halpern*

There is an old saying that man has a thousand schemes, heaven but one. But little man is continually fretting and worrying as he tries to regulate his life, and often the lives of others, according to his own finite understanding, forgetting that there is such a thing as Divine Guidance.

* * * * *

One of the wisest of the ancients, was the venerable sage Narad of Baghdad. He was a godly man of saintly humility. Never had he been known to lose his patient loving-kindness in his compassionate understanding of the problems brought to him by his distressed fellow men.

Among his devoted disciples was a young poet, Darian by name. The young man had lost his parents while still a child, and he looked up to the kindly old sage as to a father. Although his poetry had not won him popular acclaim, and often he went without food for lack of money, Darian did not lose heart. With his harp to play on, while he composed new verses that never ceased coming from the fount of his poet soul, he felt himself to be the most fortunate of mortals.

One evening, on entering the home of Narad to listen to one of the sage's discourses, Barian discovered that amongst those present was a young woman of such dazzling loveliness as he had not thought could be found on the material earth. For the first time since he had begun to attend the discourses, Darian lost interest in what Narad was saying. All his attention, his very soul, was engrossed in the charm of the young woman's features.

At the conclusion of the sage's talk, Darian was asked by Narad to recite. He needed no persuasion. From the first moment he had looked into that lovely face, he felt a surge of inspiration such as he had never before experienced. And as he had been sitting there throughout the discourse, his whole being had wanted to sing out in a joyous mood of pent-up exaltation.

And so, giving expression to his divine gift of poesy, Darian allowed all the wonder and inspiration of his mood to flow forth in his verse. And there was only one face he saw among his audience—the enraptured face of that radiantly lovely one whom he had at once recognized as the angelic embodiment of his loftiest ideal.

It seemed most natural, once Darian had concluded, to find himself walking beside her into the moonlit garden of the sage's home, the delicate scent of Jasmine coming to them in the fragrant breath of gentle breezes. Findinga bench at a little fountain of softly plashing water, they seated themselves. Darian, his eyes drinking in the unearthly beauty of her features, was the first to speak: "It seems I have known thee from the beginning of time, and yet I must ask of thee thy name."

Her luminous eyes took on a faint winsome smile, as she replied: "Sapphyra."

"Ah, and it could be none other name. For thine eyes are indeed two sapphires of wondrous luster."

"Thou speakest like the divine poet Narad saith thou art, Darian."

"Narad gives me more praise than I deserve. Yet I have not won fame—I still am only an obscure bard whose song does not appeal to the populace."

"But thou must not despair, Darian. Some day the world shall acknowledge thee for the great poet thou art. Meanwhile there are those of us who appreciate the supernal beauty of thy verse."

"Ah, Sapphyra, thy solacing voice is a melody such as I have never been able to create for clothing the words of my poems. Thou must not think that I have been unhappy in my obscurity . For I count myself blessed in having been given the high gift of poesy in this life. Never does a day go by in which I do not pour out my gratitude for the great privilege that is mine in possessing so sublime a gift. And now that I have found thee, Sapphyra, the chalice of my happiness is full to overing; for my heart telleth me that thy feelings as to the wonder of

our meeting are even the same as my own."

"Yes, Darian, thine heart does not mislead thee. The moment I saw thee, I knew thee for my beloved. Thine eyes, as they gazed into mine, seemed to fire into new life the highest aspirations of my soul."

"Say no more, Sapphyra—say no more, my beloved one. Thy voice transporteth me to such heights that I find it difficult to retain contact with my mortal vesture. Ah! this, then, is the moment ineffable for which my soul has been waiting all my life... Sapphyra...Sapphyra...is it indeed thy name I am uttering, or is it my soul sighing in the rapture of thine embrace? Thy lips melt me as in a chaste fount of ambrosial dew..."

"Darian, my beloved! Thou hast lifted me, in this one moment of our soul's ecstasy, out of time and into the eternal. When thou breathest my name, it soundeth like the gentle intonation of a wistful melody played on the strings of a harp."

"Sapphyra. . .O Sapphyra. . . there is a magic beauty in thy name, such as I have never been able to instill within the language of my poems. All my life, it seems, I have been searching for the one word of ultimate beauty. At last my search is over. For I have found it in thy name, my beloved...my Sapphyra...."

"Ah, Darian, I know not what to say at the wonder of thy words. Yet one thing my heart telleth me over and over: Now that we are met, by the infinite grace of Heaven, we must not lose each other. We shall journey to my home in Damascus, where thou wilt lack for naught. My father is the King's minister of state."

At her last words, Darian straightened on the bench, his face growing thoughtful. "Thou art of the nobility, Sapphyra?"

"Yes, Darian. Why—what is wrong, my beloved? What is troubling thee?"

Darian sat with bowed head, his eyes staring gloomily into the plashing fountain. Slowly, as though to himself, he murmured:

"It was too wondrous a dream to be true. We are but the playthings of a cruel ironic Fate that has revealed to us our eternal love, but left a chasm between us that we cannot bridge." And with those words he stood up.

Sapphyra, her eyes becoming alarmed, rose quickly to his side. "Darian, Darian, my beloved! What art thou saying! What have I done? Thou hast said thy lifetime of waiting for me seemeth like eternity. And now—now that at last we are together—ah, Darian—surely thou art not serious—I know thou art not. But I beseech thee, do not play with my heart so. I fear I cannot bear it."

"I amnot playing, Sapphyra—I am serious. Have I not told thee I am not a famous poet, but an obscure one? Perhaps, if thou hadst been of my own lowly station in life, we might have married and tried to live somehow on my meager earnings. But thinkest thou I have no pride? I will not live off thy father—nor will I subject thee to my impoverished condition. Farewell, then. Some day, perhaps, I shall come for thee when I have sufficient money to provide for thee in the manner thou deservest. Farewell, my beloved. I shall treasure this hour with thee every moment of my life." And with those words, Darian walked off, entering the home of the sage.

Trying to supress her sobbing, Sapphyra sank back upon the bench and covered her face with her hands.

Once he was inside the house, Darian advanced to where the venerable sage was seated over a ponderous tome at the fireplace, and said: "I may not see thee for a long time, Narad. Let this be our farewell."

"Taking a long journey, my son?" spoke the sage without looking up.

"Perhaps. I must begin to scheme and plan this night—I must find a way to make a big sum of money. I shall never earn it through my verse. There must be a way—perhaps I could become a brigand. There are always rich caravans traveling between the great cities of the East."

At the close of this speech, Narad looked up sharply, gazed at his disciple as though he were seeing Darian for the first time, then spoke softly, but firmly:

"Darian, what nonsense is this? Thou hast never been avid for gold—let alone dishonest gold. Have I not always taught thee to walk on the path of righteousness? Tell me, then, why thou wouldst become a transgressor?"

And when Darian had unburdened himself, the old sage addressed the poet again: "My son, wouldst thou mock the grace of the Lord who has seen fit in His infinite kindness to bring thee and Sapphyra together? What is this about thy scheming and planning to make a big sum of money? Hath not the Lord shown thee that He hath already planned thy future? Because thou hast not grieved nor been resentful over thy humble estate as an unknown poet, never scheming and planning to walk in unrighteousness, thou hast been led by Divine Guidance into the path of thy highest welfare. And now thou wouldst undo all that. Thinkest thou a divine poet, such as thou art, could become a brigand?"

"That remains to be seen, Narad. But wouldst thou tell me how Sapphyra happened to come from Damascus to thy home?"

"Nay, I do not mind telling thee. Know, then, that long years ago her father sat at my feet when I gave my discourses. He was always deeply interested in the higher wisdom. On moving to Damacus, he began to correspond with me, and I sent him my discourses copied on scrolls. Then, when you became my disciple, I began to send him your verses. He has taken a fancy to your poems, and has even interested the King in some of them. And as for Sapphyra, as she grew to young womanhood, she began to manifest a deep interest in the scrolls her father received from me. The day came when she asked her father for permission to visit here. And so, she is present with us this evening."

"Then it was your discourses that brought her here?"

"Do not be a fool, Darian, or I shall be compelled to use severe language. If I were thou, I should

get down on my knees and ask forgiveness of the Lord, then pour out thy gratitude for His divine guidance."

Slowly closing the book in his lap and rising to his feet, the sage went to his writing table near the windows, pointed to a scroll of parchment lying there, and said with a smile, "Sapphyra brought this from her father. It contains word that the King has offered to become thy royal patron." Then he went out.

Quickly Darian read the scroll, his face brightening at the good tidings. With bowed head, he sank to his knees and asked forgiveness of Heaven, pouring out the overflowing gratitude of his heart in a true prayer of utter selflessness, for the divine guidance that had been granted him. Then he hurried out into the moonlit garden to where Sapphyra was sobbing to herself. And once he was on his knees before her, he took gentle hold of her hands. "Sapphyra ... Sapphyra ... I shall never leave thee...never...throughout all Eternity...."

* * * *

It is true that man has many severe lessons to learn in his earthy experiences. And yet, cosmic law, though impersonal in its operation, is not ruthless and inexorable. It holds forth many a blessing for us, blessings that we have earned at some time or other. But in order to receive such blessings, it is necessary to keep the channel of sustained gratitude open, whether or not we understand fully the meaning of our life's experiences, so that the light of divine guidance may enter and lead us to the realization of our highest good....

As Christ met two men
On a country walk
May He join you, too,
And transform your talk.

Not just at Easter,
But each night and day,
May the Risen Lord
Be your strength and stay!

# 3 POEMS

*Carla Patsuris*

## YELLOW ROSES

Oh, yellow yellow roses
Bright where lanes are lonely
You adorn
Exquisitely

Sans eyes would all this beauty
Such as yours be only
Perfumed thorn
And memory?

## LIVING IS FOR SHARING

I reach
Within
To grope
To catch
A fleet emotion blurred
By the swiftness of its going

I plunge
Within
With hope
To come up glad
With one bright word
For sharing and bestowing.

## CHINESE WATER-COLOR

Three trees, three leaning trees
In shadows under stars
And far beyond forests vast and wide.
The one, the things I know;
The other, those that I have yet to learn.

## AN INDIAN PRAYER

*(Written by the late Sioux Yellow Lark)*

"Oh Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the winds, and whose breath gives light to all the world, hear me. I come before You, one of Your many children. I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom. Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset. Make my hands respect the things You have made, my ears sharp to hear Your voice. Make me wise, so I may know the things You have taught my people, the lesson you have hidden in every leaf and rock. I seek strength not to be superior to my brothers, but to be able to fight my greatest enemy—myself. Make me ever ready to come to You with clean hands and straight eyes, so when life fades as a fading sunset, my spirit may come to You without shame."

## THE COMMON SENSE OF PRAYER

*Marius C. Thode*

When the body does not get enough exercise, its muscles become weak and flabby. If the brain is not sufficiently employed in study and thinking, the brain cells begin to atrophy. Likewise, the God-given power of prayer loses its efficacy if not constantly kept in use.

What is prayer, and how does it work? Once we learn the secret of what prayer can win for us, we overcome most difficulties, and our private affairs greatly prosper. Prayer is the most powerful weapon in man's arsenal, but probably the least used. Prayer can be practiced at any time, and wherever we happen to be. It is a mistaken ancient fallacy which expects us to wear out the knees of our trousers when we pray. God hears every prayer under all conditions.

The heart will not accept what the brain does not understand.

First, we must sincerely and firmly believe that God is spirit, and that the Spirit of God dwells within each of us. All prayers are thoughts; and in the same manner in which our prayers reach God, so do our thoughts travel from brain to brain. You may not believe this, but coming generations will practice it much more than we do.

Not long ago my thoughts dwelled on an old time friend whom I had lost track of. I kept thinking of him, and wondered what became of him. Then one evening my telephone rang, and much to my surprise my friend was at the other end. I said to him: "This must be mental telepathy, for I have been thinking of you much lately, "He replied that he had also been thinking of me, and was impelled to phone me, now that he was visiting in New York.

What actually happenedwas that I had been sending out thought waves to this friend. The spirit of God within me had touched the spirit of God within my friend. That is the power God has given all of us, but in our hurried lives we brush it off as merely being an accidental example of mental telepathy. In actual fact it is a proven form of communication, as prayer is communication with God. Why hesitate and wait for future generations to practice this direct contact with God? It is within our power to employ it for beneficial use now. It will broaden our lives, and a new contentment will soothe the restless nervousness which interferes with our greater progress and true happiness. The world is unwittingly groping for something, and knows not what. It will cease to grope when it has learned to pray.

When a person is desperately ill, we pray God for help in behalf of his recovery. All prayers originate in thought, and through God our thoughtfulness brings comfort to the patient, and thus becomes an aid to recovery. Any good physician will confirm this. The same principle applies when we pray for God's blessing in our own behalf. A story comes to mind about a man who suffered from insomnia. He asked a friend: "How do you manage to get to sleep at night? Do you count sheep?" The friend replied: "No, I talk to the Shepherd!" When we are

relaxed is a good time to talk with God. No special language is needed. Those who have not formed the habit of daily prayer may feel impatient if they do not note prompt results. When we first venture to dance, we may be a bit clumsy at it, but if we persevere we suddenly discover that we have caught the waltz step. God understands and will help us when we keep in constant touch with Him.

All prayers for good are granted, for God never abandons mankind. It is we who become lost when we abandon God. It is too little understood that while the world needs the help of God, God also needs the help of mankind to accomplish good for our fellow beings. Man admires and appreciates the beauty of God's creation. But what man foolishly claims to have contributed is often like artificial flowers stuck in the ground without roots to grow.

Our roots are in God, and they will flourish beyond our fondest expectations, once we have formed an everyday partnership with God. All wisdom and all truth resides in God, and we are invited to borrow from it. When we acquire knowledge of this through experience, it frees us to share in the unlimited bounty God bestows. We will be reborn. That is plain everyday common sense, and not mere man-made theology.

In these times of world chaos, good people ask fearfully: "Is God on our side?" Our more serious consideration should be whether we are on God's side. Let us face facts, and recognize that most evils which exist in the world were inherited from man's waywardness throughout the ages. In our innocence we ask why God permits evil to exist. The answer is that God does not intrude in the affairs of individuals or nations until we call upon Him in our prayers for guidance.

Much of the upset in the world is chargeable to the greed for power in certain men. Also the cupidity of those who wish to possess what does not rightfully belong to them. Thus are the seeds of war planted. It is not true, as some propaganda would have us believe, that people in general favor war. If that were a fact, why are laws for compulsory military service needed? We seem to forget that God has pro-

vided abundant wealth in the world, sufficient for the needs of all men and nations. It was never intended that we fight each other for it; each can gain his just share by asking God for it. If what we pray for is good, He will show us the way. If we do not believe that wholeheartedly, our prayers will be worthless. Strong faith in God's power will gain us our desires.

The most dangerous challenge facing us today is the anti-God ideology which vows to conquer the world. Its methods are diabolical. It realizes that it cannot win without first destroying the faith people have in God. In the countries it has already devoured, its edicts forbid the worship of God. These Godly folks never dreamed that such woe could ever befall their countries. They pray secretly to God for deliverance. We must join our prayers with theirs.

Let us not be too smug about it. This treachery is at work in all countries It seeks to destroy morale by undermining morals. It seduces the ignorant into its ranks with false promises. It pays special attention to misguided youth, and ridicules the time-honored principles of proper behavior. That explains the present lack of respect for elders, and partly accounts for the increase in narcotic addiction leading to criminal activities. Obviously this treachery is conducted underhandedly by infiltrating all institutions which can serve its ends. Like a siren it plays sweetly on an instrument with false strings, to beguile the unwary into a captivity of discord.

How did this nefarious ideology achieve its success to date? The bald explanation is that these anti-God crusaders work much harder and with firmer determination for the goal they believe in, than we work for the God we believe in. Again our solution is in prayer. If those of all faiths whose fundamental belief is in God would earnestly join together in sincerely praying for God's help, and would plan unanswerably strong rebuttals, this gospel of hatred would wither on the vine. Universal prayer cannot be defeated, for the warmth of love will always prove far stronger than the cold of hatred. Our individual faith is of important

value, and becomes more effective once we join in a fellowship of prayer.

Our clergy and all parents must openly dedicate themselves to winning this righteous struggle to safeguard our homes, and our God-given liberty and freedom. A generation as yet unborn depends upon our will and our courage to preserve our heritage for them. Victory shall be ours. God will shower his blessings upon us to gain lasting peace. Have faith. "God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform!" Let us pray.

## GOD IS NOT DEAD

*Jaye Giammarino*

I see Him in the tossed hair of clouds,
Where sometimes He hunches as the maimed;
Wrapped in a sunbeam He appears thin
As a candle-flame....
Day and night He rides the wind.
His voice splits the sky
Like a blast sounded from the angel's horn....
And then, silent as the poor,
He is the moon.

# THE SEED — THE TREE — THE FRUIT

*Three poems by Aarno Davidson*

## JUDAISM / THE SEED

In centuries of the craven past,
As freedom's banner drooped half mast
And Israel, freed from Pharaoh's fold,
Extolled fat idols forged of gold,
A man named Moses, the Lord's first Seer,
Appeared upon the lawless sphere;
With prophet's tongue and steadfast hand
He saw new vistas—the Promised Land.
"God's chosen people" on this green earth
He gave the Tables of Law and worth.
Eons have passed, relentless bold,
Yet men still bow to gods of gold.
These tablets, though, with wisdom impearled,
Stand like steel pillars to brace the world,

## CHRISTIANITY / THE TREE

From that rich Seed emerged the Tree.
Its vital roots—Christianity—
Expand within earth's rigid crust
While branches of mercy, love and trust
Extend green foliage, high and low,
In shady forest and sunned plateau.
But Caesars of short-lived prominence
Spread famine, fear and pestilence,
Creating havoc and sword-deep scars
While men are sacrificed to Moloch and Mars.
The Tree may sway from East-West gales
Yet Peace surrounds God's peaks and dales.

## BAHA'ISM / THE FRUIT

The Tree grew stately—within, without.
But ripened harvest still must sprout.
Thus Prophet Bahaulah—The Fruit,
Came omnipresent—the Absolute!
Enter my mansion with steady pace,
He pleaded through tears but sunlit face:
The oneness of God upon this globe
Shall wrap mankind in love's gold robe;
All Babel towers soon shall crumble
As every race grows wise and humble.
My fruit shall sate the appetite
Of those who hunger to see His light.
O bury charred crumbs of war and greed—
Preserve the Fruit, the Tree, the Seed!

# SELECTIONS FROM THE PHILOSOPHICAL WRITINGS

*K. M. P. Mohamed Cassim*

Man is in search of happiness. He thinks by earning a lot of money as well as by enjoying sensual pleasures he can attain happiness. But the fact is he is dissatisfied after every form of enjoyment. Where can we get real happiness? The real state of happiness or complete satisfaction is an inward state which means we are happy or experience the bliss of contentment only when our minds are peaceful. When our minds are agitated by contradictory desires we feel mental disturbances and worries. A person who understands the various functions of his mind correctly will certainly have the ability to control the mind and thereby enjoy the beauty of life without distractions.

In silence alone we feel full of blessedness and vision of Reality. Wisdom flourishes silently and in deep meditation alone self-knowledge is revealed to us. We must have mental power with purification of mind to live harmoniously in the world. We must delve deeply in meditation to understand reality and we must search our heart constantly to discover reality.

Whenever we have strong desires we should not react immediately because by reacting in the shape of indulgence or by suppression we are fabricating more desires which will always disturb us. The desire projects itself into the conscious or unconscious level of our mind and therefore we must watch the desire first by paying full attention to it. We must study the desire in a detached manner without projecting the past impressions and in this very process of awareness the desire is understood and dissolved. When the disturbing elements of psychological complications are eradicated then only we are free.

To study our minds is very important in leading happy and peaceful lives, because only through our minds are we affected. If we observe the mind we will find that it reacts constantly and it is these reactions which give us either painful or pleasant experience. We can say the mind itself is a bundle of reactions and impressions. Why is there reaction in our action? Why while we act do we feel psychological disturbance? Since our action is incomplete the reaction comes in the shape of mental disturbance. Why is there incomplete experience in our action? The incompleteness occurs in our action owing to the distraction of the mind by past psychological memories which are preventing us from paying full attention to the work in which we are engaged.

## "THE OPPORTUNITY OF MARRIAGE"

*Eric Butterworth*

I have a minister friend who says that the most disturbing part of his ministry has been the discovery of how rare it is to sign a marriage license where the parties have not been married at least once before. Certainly the divorce rate today is something to be concerned about.

T. S. Eliot characterizes the plight of so many marriages with devastating simplicity in this line from his "Cocktail Party":

"They do not repine;
Are contented with the morning that separates
And with the evening that brings together
For casual talks before the fire
Two people who know they do not understand each other,
Breeding children whom they do not understand
And who will never understand them."

We often hear the statement, "This or that marriage failed." But it is not marriage that fails. It is people that fail. All that marriage ever does is to show people up. No healthy adjustment can be made in marriage until the parties involved realize that as individuals they have a responsibility to improve upon the person they presented themselves as being in the beginning of their relationship.

It seems to be that the first crisis of marriage comes when two people look at each other through the foggy glass of emotional love and say, "He (or she) is just about the most perfect creature ever born." Let's face it, perfect people don't get married. The fact that two people are drawn together is evidence of an instability in each one seeking stability and security and strength through uniting with another.

Each of us has the potential of being that "most perfect creature ever born." And perhaps that is what love is: the ability to see prophetically, to see one another as he can be. This, coupled with the will to roll up our sleeves and help this person to fulfill that potential. But this means that marriage is not simply walking through the festive archway to live happily ever after. It is the open door into a workshop of human growth

and development.

In the marriage ritual is the statement that the partners have been drawn together by an "irresistible attraction." This is more true than we might imagine. It is true even if the partners prove to be incompatible, or seemingly so. Marriage is one excellent opportunity in life's eternal process of growth. If it brings you love and blessing, then this is the outworking of consciousness for both partners, and their needed challenges in life will come in other ways.

However, if marriage brings seeming conflict between the parties, then this is the next step in growth which the soul has drawn to each one. Thus, instead of saying, "I don't have to stand for that," we should be saying, "This —this is the reason we were drawn together." Overcoming this challenge is the important next step in life for us. This doesn't preclude separation or divorce, but it does mean that such a step should only be a last recourse, for that growth step must be taken eventually. We only postpone it to a later day.

Socrates was once asked by a young man whether he should marry. The wise one replied, "Marry by all means. If you get a good wife you will be happy. If you get a poor wife, you will become a philosopher, and that is good for any man." This may seem small comfort when a home is disrupted by differences of opinion and temperament.

Let us be humble enough to consider the possibility that marriage is a divine process by which two people are brought together who have the character and consciousness to be the right challenge and the right influence in helping each other to unfold their inner potentialities. And then let us be unselfish enough to get our thoughts away from ourself long enough to look for the ways in which we can be more understanding, more patient, and more downright helpful to this person with whom we share such a great investment of feelings, of material things, and of years of our life.

I think it was Goethe who said, "Marriage is not a goal in itself, but an opportunity to mature." Perhaps we should ask ourselves occasionally, "Am I making the most of the opportunity?"

There is a "time to heal," and that time
is now.....

## THE BLESSED COMPANIONSHIP OF PRAYER

*Alice Richmond*

My sick friend called up the stairs to my rosebud-papered little room: "Hi, good morning! Are you up yet?" By the sound of gladness lilting a note that excitedly thrilled upwards, I knew something earth-shaking had happened. And later as we both sat downstairs at the breakfast table in "the bright dungeon of her kitchen" as she called it, she shared with me what she said was "the great discovery" that changed her life!

But let me explain something about myself first, before beginning the tale of her discovery. Always I had been a prayerful little girl brought up by my New England mother to ask the Lord with words of my own choosing to ease my childish troubles away. That habit had strengthened me through all the years of later life wherever I found myself upon God's earth: during one European war and during the flood-swept and dark-tunnelled days of turbulent moments in other places. These heartfelt prayers helped me lose my fright when the good Lord guided me around imagined obstacles.

This friend of mine was a wealthy woman, well along in years. Continually she scoffed at my prayerful attitude which she exclaimed was "assumed and unnatural." My missionary ways were silently engaged in prayerful nights directed to keep her healthy since she was what she proudfully called "a lifetime hypochondriac." She imagined that my joy in the morning was unnaturally "affected" and made it a point of telling me off in a laughing manner. She could not believe that

"anybody in their right mind could be so happy continuously." My churchgoing also bewildered her because I never suggested she pray or read any of my great books I had in my room.

Therefore, the time of her wonderment was so much greater because of her "great discovery" that truly there *is* a good Lord protecting His children, Who healed "when one prayed believing." Confidentially she told me she had been healed of a deep pain that had bothered her for years at night so strongly that sometimes she had been afraid to go to bed without pain-tranquillizing pills her doctor had prescribed through long years. In my little room I noticed that sometimes my prayer books had been moved around—sometimes I could not find certain small prayers for healing that I used for myself. Never had I thought she borrowed these (because of her scoffing at my praying) yet later I found these books in other places.

Suddenly she revealed to me shamefacedly she had borrowed them and kept them in bed with her. She told me further that she tried reading these little prayers for healing through nights when she found she could not sleep because she had not taken her prescribed pill. Nightly she was "experimenting with prayer." "Glory be!" she smiled, "last night I said, "glory be to the Lord." And she stammered to explain, "I must tell you I think your prayerful little booklets did heal me of pain, even my doctor told me I only imagined. Fancy that, my dear? I truly *know* those small prayers healed me! It has been weeks since my pain vanished and I attribute the disappearance to prayerful words I have been reading in your little prayer booklets for many a month!" (So that was where my booklets had been mislaid, down in her bed.)

This wealthy little old lady does not yet go to church but she prays in bed with my prayer books: she calls this her "great discovery" to heal pain. She even has stopped asking her doctor for a renewal of her pain-quieting pills. "Imagine that, my dear?" she confided, her blue-wrinkled eyelids quivering with joy. "And to think I have been laughing at you all these years about your assumed jollity! *Now*, I can be happy, too, and freed from pain forevermore."

## IN MEMORIAM

**A Friend of Long Standing Passes.** Since the announcement of the publication of A. L. Alexander's latest book, "Treasurehouse" (in the February issue of our bimonthly), we have been saddened by the sudden passing of Albert Louis Alexander. His death was first announced at the close of his radio program on Friday evening, February 24, over Radio Station WEVD, New York.

Early in 1951, Mr. Alexander became interested in Fellowship in Prayer "because I believe in the work and its urgency." He was once called "a one-man peace movement" and during World War II he said: "The one great dream that I have is that some day after this war is over, the whole world will understand mediation and adopt it, toward the end of preserving the peace, and mold the sorry scheme of things a little nearer to the heart's desire." To creative people in all fields, he said: "Would you have your work endure, build on the human heart." ... And it was our founder, Carl Allison Evans, who said: "Any lasting peace in the world, must come from the individual heart."

## LIVING FAITH

*Cornelia Bagarotti*

Those who have Faith in God must remember that God uses the human heart as his agent on earth. Thus to have faith in God means as well to have a living faith in the inherent goodness of each human heart through which goodness, love, mercy, help and compassion can move... from the heavenly world into the world of matter.

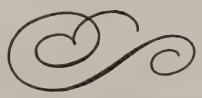
Many who pray to God for help or strength or blessing repulse often deny the very answer to that prayer which flows through God toward them from the hearts of those around them or from strangers. For they cannot believe that hidden within each other human being lies the seed of the Spirit waiting to be recognized and spoken to and to be called forth.

They say to themselves "Oh, so and so would not care, or would not understand, or would not help." This is a judgment which denies the God within their fellowman and closes the door to the face of any communion or help before it can even approach them.

A healing minister was called to the bed of an elderly Jew who had years before become a Christian despite the intense opposition of his family and friends. This man was in the terminal stages of cancer, unable to eat, and it was assumed by the doctors that this was to be his last day. But he had sufficient faith in the goodness within men to ask to have the healer come to him and to ask him to pray for his healing. When the healer said to him, "Imagine that my hands are those of the Christ," he did so. After the healer left, the nurse came to inject morphine but by error it spilled out unbeknownst to her on the pillow. Once again he had sufficient Faith to believe that God could give him natural pain-free sleep without morphine. That night he slept soundly for the first time in years and awoke the next day healed. Within a week he was

out of the hospital and lived many more years to old age in perfect health.

Living faith applies to all that we face. Be it in the human world, or the animal world, or the insect world, or in nature. Behind each and everything man views he must see not only the hand of God but the face of God. He must believe in the innate good and not in evil. If he cannot do so he cannot have the faith that attracts blessing and which is the answer to prayer. Living Faith is what the term implies...living with Faith in all that surrounds him. Living in a state of mind and heart that places God first and within all that he meets and touches and sees. From the wild flower by the road, to the bird in the tree, or the deer in the woods, or the child playing in the meadow, and living with all these in the same reverence, gentleness, and love as he would meet from the Lord himself. Then and then only can the goodness of God flow back to man.



CALL OF BUDDHA

Buddhist monks retire,
beg, and continue preaching
and prove their calling.

LIFE, LIKE THE BACTRIAN CAMEL

Life, like the Bactrian camel,
has two humps—
one to carry the burdens of yesterday,
and the other
the hope of tomorrow.

*William Walter DeBolt*

*AN EASTER MESSAGE*

# THE REVELATION OF THE RISEN CHRIST

*W. J. Thompson*

In the Gospel of John, Chapter 20, verse 1, we read, "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early unto the sepulchre." And in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 24, verse 13, we are informed, "Behold two of them went that same day to Emmaus."

In these beautiful stories of the appearance of the Risen Christ, first to Mary Magdalene, and then to Cleopas and his companion on the way to Emmaus, we note two points of similarity, and one point of significant difference!

## *To Humble Folk*

First, we find that the Risen Lord revealed Himself to humble individuals. Mary was a woman of Magdala. The gospel of Mark informs us, "He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils." (Mark 16:9).

The two disciples on the way to Emmaus were so obscure that the name of one of them had been forgotten. One name only—that of Cleopas—is given in the narrative. (Luke 24:18). These two men occupied no proud position in the group of disciples, but were humble believers. These two appearances of the Risen Christ reveal our Lord's regard for the lowly. This teaches us that the Saviour values the humblest soul, and those who have the greatest need of encouragement are most likely to receive it!

> "Though the Lord be high,
> Yet hath He respect unto the lowly."
>
> (Psalm 138:6)

Not to the wise, or famous, not even to the Chief Apostles did the Risen Christ appear first, but to several ordinary persons! So, if you consider yourself a common-place sort of individual, let this message encourage you, for it is part of the Glory of Easter that our Lord first showed himself to ordinary people!

The second point of likeness between these two appearances of the Risen Redeemer is found in this fact—that both revelations were given to those in trouble!

Mary stood by the tomb of Jesus, weeping bitterly, and we learn that the two men walking to Emmaus were discouraged and sad! In each case there was need for comfort, and the fact that Christ appeared to them first should teach us that Christ sympathizes with the sorrowing everywhere. One writes:

"What can it mean? Is it aught to Him
That the nights are long, and days are dim?
Can He be touched with the grief I bear
Which burdens heart, mind and soul with care?

Let all who are sad take heart again,
We are not alone in time of pain,
The Saviour comes from heaven above,
To soothe and comfort us with His love;

The sorrow that bows you down, He bears,
So rest upon Him, because — He cares!"

*Near When Needed*

Sorrow never seeks the Risen Lord in vain. He is nearest when most needed. Deep desire for Him leads to discovery of His Saving Presence! Before His death Christ was constantly comforting the discouraged and distressed; and, following His Resurrection, He has continued His tender ministry of mercy up to this present moment. If you are in trouble turn to the Risen Redeemer, and you will find the Glory,

of Easter, as grief gives way to gladness and sorrow changes into song!

In conclusion, please observe the striking difference between the sorrow of Mary Magdalene, and the sadness of the two men on the way to Emmaus.

Mary's trouble was emotional, while the trouble of the two men was intellectual. Mary was grieving over the loss of her dearest friend, while the two men were worrying about the loss of a great hope. They said—"we have trusted that He should have redeemed Israel." (Luke 24:21)

*Heart and Mind*

It was the empty grave that troubled Mary! But it was the crucifixion on Calvary that perplexed the two men. The significant difference between the sorrow of Mary Magdalene and the sadness of the two men on the way to Emmaus may be summed up as follows—Mary was broken in heart, but the two disciples were confused in mind.

It is important to note that the difference in the need accounts for the difference in the appearances of Jesus at His Resurrection. To Mary, broken-hearted for her Lord, Jesus uttered just one word—her own name—spoken as only He could say it, proving beyond all doubt that He was indeed alive!

But to the two men walking to Emmaus, puzzled by the problem of His crucifixion, the Risen Christ "expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." (Luke 24:27). What a Scripture lesson that must have been!

In the case of Mary, the Risen Redeemer comforted the heart and dealing with the two disciples, He enlightened the mind.

This is much more than a study in correct psychological "approach,"—it is a revelation of our Master's unfailing ability to give the right spiritual response to the individual's special need. This is the

Glory of Easter—that the Risen Christ understands and responds to your personal call.

*Make it Wonderful*

Make this Easter the most wonderful time in your life by accepting the Revelation of the Lord meant specially for you!

As Christ called Mary
That first Easter Day
May He speak your name
Here upon Life's way!

From the PLEDGE OF IMMORTALITY
*Mary Lamoreaux Burnell*

There is a power
that is said to be
distilled upon the earth,
even as dew may fall down
upon the ground.

So this power is above
all sense of right and wrong.

This power is the health
of nations because its
origin is in God, the
great and supreme good

that is now spreading
over the earth.

Like a mist it is sent.
And every country of the
world is being baptized
in this mist of the Spirit.
It is called the breath of
the Spirit, and everywhere
this breath is breathing
into the lungs of the people
and breathing into their
affairs, breathing into the
skies and the hills and
the grass, and every form of
creation which compasses
the great frame of creation.
It is all breathed into and
filled with the presence of
God, even as the wisdom of
Solomon: "The Spirit of the
Lord hath filled the earth,
and the containing frame
thereof hath knowledge of what is said."
(everything, every word that is spoken.)

And now into that frame
you speak that word of
Absolute Truth that all is
good, above the sense of goodness;
that all is good above
the sense of right and wrong.

All is now established
as the wisdom of the nations,
and as the protection
and guidance of the nations.
And no evil thing shall prevail,
for there is not anything
against this eternal
goodness that is God.

And everyone who has ever
had any contact with truth,
or love of it, or even
heard the name of God,
shall be filled with the
presence of this breath
that is breathing into them,
and they shall
accept that breath
as a heavenly fragrance;
and they shall be
delivered from any
sense of evil.

This is the Word
that is sent
by the Absolute Truth,
the Presence of God
in our midst.

## A WRITER TO REMEMBER

*Estelle Davis Taylor*

John Burroughs wrote of simple little everyday things. He told of daily happenings simply, but somehow, his greatness shown through his words. He said once, "To interpret Nature is not to improve upon her. It is to draw her out."

His thoughts and books have enriched the lives of many. He was loved by thousands. He wrote of finding an unknown bird in a forest, the discovery of a dead tanager, and his inability to shoot a red fox when he was hunting on a mountain.

He was interested in life and in living. Theodore Roosevelt dedicated one of his books to John Burroughs. Henry Ford presented Mr. Burroughs with a new automobile with nickel trim, because he admired him as a writer and a man.

He was born on a remote farm in the Catskill Mountains in 1837. He worked at many jobs to earn money for books. He was often discouraged and thwarted by his family. In spite of many drawbacks, he made a literary career for himself. He was often burdened with financial troubles. He worked many years at uncongenial jobs.

He wrote "The most precious things of life are near at hand, without money and without price. Each of you has the whole wealth of the universe at your door."

He was the recipient of honorary University degrees. He was a member of the American Academy Of Arts And Letters.

## WORDS TO REMEMBER

John Burroughs

Serene, I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, nor tide, nor sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate,
For lo! my own shall come to me."

"Nor time, nor space, nor deep nor high,
Can keep my own from me."

— WAITING

"I was born with a chronic anxiety about the weather."

— IS IT GOING TO RAIN?

"Literature is an investment of genius which pays dividends to all subsequent times."

— LITERARY FAME

"It is always easier to believe than to deny. Our minds are naturally affirmative."

— THE LIGHT OF DAY

"I go to books and to nature as a bee goes to the flower, for a nectar that I can make into my own honey."

— THE SUMMIT OF THE YEARS

## OLD HOUSES

*Esther Belle Heins*

At times old houses, day or night,
Stretch wearily and groan;
Their memories will rustle too,
I've heard them when alone.

No doubt my dwelling place still dreams
Of families it housed,
Broods of the days when mirth awoke
Old timbers that had drowsed.

My children now are married, gone,
And when my husband died—
Each wall stepped back one lonely foot
And left me lost inside.

Old houses can be reverent,
Mine proves it every day;
In utter quietude it waits—
When I kneel down to pray.

## NOTICES and COMMENTS

*WORLD-WIDE DIVINE LOVE.* Our Advisor Dr. C. H. Yeang in Malaysia has sent us another large quantity of the World-Wide Divine Love Radiation Service leaflets. Thousands of free copies of this leaflet have been distributed around the world, and we are constantly receiving requests for more. We have previously sent out copies with our bimonthly, but for the benefit of new subscribers and readers we are enclosing a copy in this issue.

*GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR MEN IN SERVICE.* Why not remember a loved one in the armed forces by sending him a gift subscription to FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER? All you need to do is to send us his address and your check for $3.00 for a year's subscription. (Ordinarily the subscription rate for overseas is $4.00 a year covering the additional postage.) Our bimonthly is an antidote for homesickness and loneliness. You will never make a better investment for another.

*SUBSCRIPTION RATES.* FIP is published six times a year at the rate of $3.00. Special rates are available for additional copies and back issues.

*NEW FIP EDITOR.* The Executive Secretary of Fellowship in Prayer is happy to inform our readers that, at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees held in February, Mr. Paul Griffith was appointed Editor of FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER to fill the vacancy left by Neil Mellblom. Mr. Griffith is a graduate of Yale University; has been a teacher of English, French and Latin, and has taught creative writing—he, himself, being a writer. He has had long experience in the editorial field—serving on the staffs of LIFE Magazine and PRESBYTERIAN LIFE Magazine for a number of years. Mr. Griffith is presently on the editorial staff of Religious News Service in New York City and was a colleague of Neil Mellblom, our former editor.... Several weeks ago Mr. Mellblom accepted a position with the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, Switzerland. In a recent letter, he writes that he and his family are nicely settled in a lovely three-bedroom apartment in a new high-rise apartment house overlooking the Jura mountain range in France with a view also of Mont Blanc and the Soleve range—"The scenery is something hard to describe, it's so beautiful." He sends "best wishes to all the friends of the Fellowship." He will be a Fellowship Advisor in Switzerland.

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## FAITH LEADS AND GUIDES

Faith leads the birds like pale
Columbus saw
as he walked the narrow deck
on a troubled ocean
before the day,
stung by the bee of sunset,
went away.

And faith guides suns to rise above
the law
of dreariest brown to cloak
departing autumn,
and sends the light
of all the stars to comfort
alien night.

"For a world united in prayer"

FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, 22 EAST 29 ST., NEW YORK, N. Y. 10016